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CENTRAL INTELLIGENCE AGENCY REPORT NO. **SECRET**

## **INFORMATION REPORT**

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**REPORT NO.**

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COUNTRY Bulgaria

SUBJECT The Bulgarian Textile Industry

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**SUPPLEMENT TO  
REPORT NO.**

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1. The production of textiles is the most important industry in Bulgaria. The industry is concentrated in the following cities, listed in the order of their importance: Gabrovo, Sofia, Sliven, Plovdiv, and Stalin (formerly Varna.)

### Raw Materials

2. Bulgaria's present production of cotton is the same as it was before the war, about three to four million kilograms per year. I recently heard that this is to be increased to about six or seven million kilos, but I do not know the date when this target is to be reached.
  3. Before the war 50% of Bulgaria's cotton imports came from India, the remainder from Egypt, South America, and the US. Today, Bulgaria imports only Soviet and Egyptian cotton; 18 million kilos annually of the former and about three to five million kilos of the latter. I have never had the opportunity to verify these figures. The Egyptian cotton comprises only very fine grades, while the Soviet cotton consists of much coarser grades.
  4. Bulgaria buys almost none of its Egyptian cotton directly from Egypt. Instead, the USSR purchases it from Egypt and then sells it to Bulgaria. I believe that the reason for this procedure is that the USSR lacks sufficient spinning capacity and therefore purchases cotton for processing in the satellite countries, afterward buying the finished textiles from the satellites.

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5. Most of the hemp required by Bulgaria is grown domestically. Most of the country's flax requirements must be imported. Prior to the war, Bulgaria imported flax from Italy and the Baltic States. I do not know the source of flax today, but possibly it is the USSR.
6. Wool produced in Bulgaria is coarse. Before the war, Bulgaria imported Australian wool from England and wool thread from Germany. I do not know whether Bulgaria is importing wool today, but I do know there is no import of wool thread from Germany.

Spinning and Weaving Capacity

7. In 1939 the inventory of cotton spinning machinery in Bulgaria totalled 240,000 spinning spindles. So far as I know, no spinning machines have been imported since that time except for a 60,000-spindle mill purchased from East Germany in 1950-51. It is planned to increase this capacity through the importation of an additional 60,000 spindles of spinning machinery by 1953. In Bulgaria we figure that the average life span for spinning machines is thirty years.
8. In 1939 Bulgarian spinning mills, working two eight-hour shifts per day, produced about 20 million kilograms of cotton thread ranging from #8 to #36, with #16 being the average. (These figures refer to the British system of designating cotton thread.) Approximately 50 to 60% of the thread produced was #16, the remainder being divided among Numbers 5, 12, 24, and 36. After the war the trend was toward the production of coarser threads, so that now approximately 50 to 60% of cotton thread output is #14.
9. In 1939 the inventory of wool spinning machines ranged from two to three thousand spinning spindles for wool (Streichgarn) and about 1500 for worsted (Kammgarn). No additional machinery has been imported since World War II, and to the best of my knowledge, none is scheduled to be imported. Wool spinning capacity is insufficient to keep the looms fully occupied; hence 50% of Bulgarian requirements for cloth and thread have to be imported.
10. In 1939 there were approximately three to four thousand spindles for spinning hemp and flax in Bulgaria. There have been no imports since that time, and, to the best of my knowledge, none are planned. Most of the machines are 50 to 60 years old.
11. In 1939 there were approximately seven thousand looms in Bulgaria for weaving cotton and silk and approximately 2,500 heavy looms for wool cloth. There were another thousand looms for the weaving of hemp and flax. No new machines have been imported since that time, nor are any such imports scheduled at the present time.
12. One of the bottlenecks in the Bulgarian textile industry today is machinery for processing cloth into finished textile products, i.e., dyeing, mercerizing, laundering, pressing, and buttonholing machines.

Textile Plants

13. The two largest prewar cotton spinning mills in Bulgaria were "Bulgarian" in Gorna Banya near Sofia and "Tsar Boris" in Varna. Each contained about 25,000 spindles.
14. Today the largest spinning factory would be the 60,000 spinning spindle installation purchased from East Germany. It is called "Textilna Vlakna" and is located, I believe, in Nadeszda, a village near Sofia.

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22. The only complete textile machines manufactured in Bulgaria are some small looms and auxiliary textile machines of various kinds produced in small machine shops. The Bulgarian Government plans, I believe, to produce more and more of its own textile machinery requirements. As a beginning, they are now trying to start production of spare parts which, over a period of years, will probably advance to the stage where complete machines of simple design will be produced.
23. I have never seen any textile machinery of USSR manufacture and I am not aware that the USSR has shipped any textile machinery to Bulgaria.

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